Herbert, S. *First Principles of Heredity.* A. and C. Black; 1910; pp. 192; 5*s.* net.

WE have only praise for the result of Dr. Herbert's attempt to provide us with a simple and brief, but at the same time scientific and comprehensive, survey of our present knowledge concerning the laws of heredity, their working and significance. Hitherto there has existed no book upon heredity whose bulk and technicality did not appal, weary or distract a first enquirer. *First Principles of Heredity* is designed for those without any previous knowledge of this difficult subject. And since "social questions" have never before occupied so great a share of men's thoughts; since, in fact, we have all become reformers under different names, it is a matter of supreme importance that as a foundation to our thinking we should possess an accurate knowledge of the laws of life. "Procreation being the foundation of life, the science of heredity forms the basis of the science of life, and its principles must therefore be considered the fundamentals of all Social Science." On this account Dr. Herbert urges every earnest thinker to take some little trouble to acquire a knowledge of the laws of inheritance. He has himself furnished the means, and our thanks are due to him for a very sound and serviceable book. Particular mention must be made of the wealth of diagrams and tables which help to facilitate an understanding of difficult points, and of the completely admirable and admirably complete glossary of biological terms, which will be much appreciated by many readers.

R. D. K.

Davenport, C. B. *Eugenics.* H. Holt & Co., New York; 2*s.*

THIS little book consists of two addresses, the first on "Fit and Unfit Matings," read before the American Academy of Medicine at Yale University the second, an outline of a scheme for further work in the same direction.

Mr. Davenport sets out his subject from the point of view of a thoughtful person, who may be contemplating marriage and stops to consider if the proposed union is likely to lead to healthful, mentally well-endowed offspring. Writing as a biologist, not as a physician, he declares himself to deal with the inherited characteristics and does not dwell on the effect that acquired conditions, such as disease, alcoholism, or the drug habit, may have on the germ plasm.

By means of short pedigrees, the behaviour of various abnormalities, such as imbecility, skin disease, heart weakness, suicidal tendency, etc., can be traced, as the peculiarity descends from one generation to another. Some of the examples given well illustrate the point that specific diseases are not usually inherited, but only a condition of liability or non-resistance to a particular class of ailment.

Mr. Davenport sums up his facts with much definition. He enunciates certain rules which should guide the matings of persons who are conscious of possessing various abnormalities either in themselves or in the stock to which they belong.

It is melancholy to think how much crime and misery would be saved, how much disappointment and sorrow would be foregone if men and women acquired and acted on the knowledge of the principles of human inheritance which are briefly set forth in this excellent little book.

C. D. W.

Ribbert, HUGO, M.D., Director of the Pathological Institute, Bonn University. *Rassenhygiene.* Friedrich Cohen, Bonn; 1910; pp. 65.

A POPULAR treatise on race hygiene by so eminent a pathologist as Professor Ribbert must claim the attention of eugenists beyond his own country, and it is to be hoped that this earnest and lucid exposition of our cause will become more widely known by being translated into English. That national

efficiency depends on racial efficiency, and that the nation of to-morrow will not be sounder than ourselves unless the procreation of the unfit is checked, is a truism that cannot be emphasised too often or too impressively. *Gutta cavat lapidem non vi, sed semper cadendo.* "So long as uneugenic unions are not refused social sanction we must insist on educating the people to recognise the dangers of uneugenic marriages and dissuade the unfit from procreating themselves. . . . It must become part and parcel (*Fleisch und Blut*) of every human being that it is wrong, nay, even a crime, to give life to an unsound progeny. It is even more wicked than to deliberately destroy the health of a sound human being."

J. H. K.

Stocker, R. DIMSDALE. *Social Idealism.* Williams & Norgate; 1910; pp. 186; 3s. net.

To say of Mr. Stocker's book that it contains nothing which has not been better said a hundred times already is to admit that at any rate it contains a good deal of truth. We wonder, however, what purpose its publication serves, and who will be found to read it. The author makes at least one statement for which we thank him: "The supreme test of the greatness of any people must eventually depend upon one fact, and one fact alone: the efficiency of the generation to come." But unfortunately Mr. Stocker appears not to realise that the efficiency of the generation to come depends most largely upon the efficiency of those who will give it birth. Accordingly he proceeds to spoil this excellent sentiment by maintaining that "we must begin with the child." Whereas it is certain that, if the race is to advance, we must, on the contrary, begin with the parent. It is not only on account of such error that we are unable to recommend his book. It is merely a mixture of commonly accepted ideas, expressed in the worst platform style.

R. D. K.

Journal of Genetics, Vol. I., No. 1, November, 1910. Edited by W. **Bateson,** M.A., F.R.S. (*Director of the John Innes Horticultural Institution*), and R. C. **Punnett,** M.A. (*Professor of Biology in the University of Cambridge*). Published by the University Press at Cambridge; price 10s. net.

THIS is the first number of a new journal intended for the publication of records of original research in Heredity, Variation, and allied subjects. From time to time it is also intended to publish articles summarising the existing state of knowledge in the various branches of Genetics, but reviews and abstracts of work published elsewhere will not, as a rule, be included in the *Journal.*

This first number contains five articles, all being of the nature of scientific memoirs dealing with the exposition of new knowledge. The first is by Professor Keeble and Miss C. Pellew, and describes some breeding experiments with the white-flowered varieties of Primula Sinensis.

The second is by Dr. Redcliffe N. Salaman, and gives an account of some experiments begun in 1906 on the inheritance of colour and various other characters in the potato. This paper is of great interest and is illustrated by twenty-nine beautiful plates, some of them coloured, shewing the hereditary transmission of form and size.

Professor Keeble and Miss Pellew have a second memoir, which forms the third contribution to the *Journal,* in which they describe the mode of inheritance of stature and time of flowering in peas. Stature in peas appears to be associated with length and thickness of the intemodes, tall peas being